THE THIRD DAY.

14th March, 1923.

The Assembly met at 11-30 A. M. on Wednesday, the 14th March, 1923.

18. Desirability of constituting Karunagapalli, Kartikapalli and Mavelikara into a single taluk with its head-quarters at Kayankulam.

Mr. N. Siddick Sait (Member, Nominated) said that Kayankulam was almost the centre of the three taluks of Karunagapalli, Kartikapalli and Mavelikara, and that its previous history as the headquarters of a ruling chief and its importance as a commercial centre at present entitled it to become the headquarters of a Taluk Tahsildar. The Member pointed out that the necessity for such a change had been imminent even before the recent re-distribution of revenue and magisterial charges. The distribution of areas into *pakuthies* and taluks for administrative purposes was made as much with a view to secure to the people convenience in matters affecting their interests as to facilitate the conduct of administration. The Member stated that Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao, C. I. E., a former Dewan, had an idea of reducing the taluks of the State into twenty-one, but he retired earlier than was expected and was therefore unable to do anything in that direction. The size of the taluks in Travancore was comparatively smaller than in British India, where the land revenue system worked well, and the Government might, with advantage, reconstitute them after making suitable further reductions in their number. He said that it was the duty of the Government to foster the development of commerce and increase the financial resources of the State, and that, judged from that standpoint also, Kayankulam deserved to be the headquarters of a taluk. In point of distance too, from one end of the above-mentioned taluks to the other, Kayankulam would be nearer to several *pakuthies* than the present headquarters of those taluks. As regards some of the outlying *pakuthies*, the Member suggested that the southernmost *pakuthies* of the Karunagapalli taluk, *viz.*, Tekkumbhagam, Chavara, Tevalakara and Panmana, might be tacked on to the Quilon taluk and that the easternmost *pakuthies* of Mavelikara, *viz.*, Pandalam Tekkekkara, Tonnallur, Palamel and Nuranad, might be added to the Kunnattur taluk. In conclusion, the Member prayed that his representation might meet with the kind consideration of Government.

Dewan's reply.—I am sorry I cannot give an encouraging answer. The question of revision of the boundaries of the several taluks of the State was examined only very recently. It is, therefore, too soon to say that they should be revised again, before knowing what the effect of the revision so recently made is going to be.

You propose that three taluks should be consolidated into one taluk. I do not think that the people of Karunagapalli, Kartikapalli and Mavelikara would thank you for your proposal. You say that, in British India, taluks are much larger in size and yet they work very well. But I must tell you that your analogy is misleading. What are the conditions in British India? The taluks in British India are much less thickly populated than here. And, then, there is in British India an intermediary class of officers, *viz.*, the Revenue Inspectors, who do not exist in this country. The revenue *firka* in Madras is roughly equivalent to a taluk here.

You suggest that the Tahsildar's presence at Kayankulam would be conducive to the growth of the town and that the Tahsildar would attend to the improvement of commerce. I do not think that the presence of the Tahsildar has anything to do with the growth of a town. You have a Stationary Magistrate and a Municipal Council—a body which is much more useful for the development of communications and for giving facilities for improving trade and commerce than a Tahsildar whose duties are more or less confined to land

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

revenue. You should remember that Alleppey, until the other day, was not the headquarters of a Tahsildar, and yet that town has grown and is of first importance in the State. I do not think that the time has yet come to re-examine the question of refixing the taluk boundaries.

19. Evils of the latest reorganisation of the Land Revenue Department including Survey.

Mr. Narayanan Madhavan Karta (Member, Shertallai Taluk) said that, at the time of original survey, the Survey Department, without referring to the old *ozhuku* accounts, demarcated and surveyed most of the private holdings which were being utilised for public purposes, such as temple tanks, snake groves, and temple sites, and noted them down as *porambokes* in the survey and demarcation register. The Settlement Department adopted that survey and demarcation and the ryots had not the slightest information about the existence of such *porambokes*. The Member requested that those *poramboke* subdivisions might now be surveyed and demarcated, and the boundaries made clear to the adjacent land-holders as per the actual lay of the land on the ground. If, after that process, the ryots began to encroach, encroachment cases might be taken against them, but not until then. With regard to full *poramboke* numbers, the Land Records Superintendent might be ordered to prepare a statement of such numbers as were in the possession of private individuals, but erroneously recorded as *porambokes* in the settlement, and the mistakes rectified by Government by registering them in the names of the occupants without *tharavila* and without driving them to civil courts for remedy. The Member also complained that demarcation stones were planted without notice to the parties and excessive cost recovered from them for the stones planted by the department, each stone costing as high as Rs. 5, while the actual value was only 5 or 6 *chackrams*, and said that such stones could be sold to the ryots at a lower price.

The Member next observed that a resurvey before resettlement was necessary for the proper maintenance of land records and the efficient administration of land revenue. He prayed that a special officer might be appointed to compile a Resurvey and Resettlement Code and that he might be deputed to collect useful information from British India and other Indian States. Commenting on the recent reorganisation of the Survey Department, he pointed out that the pay assigned to surveyors who had to do a lot of outdoor work was only Rs. 25 to start with, and that was inadequate.

As regards the reorganisation of the Land Revenue Department, the Member pointed out that two difficulties in the proper administration of the Land Revenue Department were the short-handedness of the village staff and the haphazard manner in which the *pakuthies* were formed at the time of the survey. The Member then made the following suggestions for the better administration of the Land Revenue Department:—

(1) A reform should be effected in the splitting up of the *pakuthies* and employing additional staff for the *pakuthies*.

(2) The Assistant Tahsildars who now attended to all revenue work except that of the collection of revenue should be entrusted with that work also.

(3) Since the Land Revenue Commissioner attended to all land revenue affairs, the post of Division Peishkars might be abolished and the Division Assistants might be designated Assistant Commissioners and asked to attend to the work of those officers also, with less pay and less establishment.

(4) The Assistant Tahsildars might be appointed as Tahsildars on their present pay and they might be assisted in the work of *kist* collection by one or two Revenue Inspectors.

Dewan's reply.—The replies I gave to Mr. N. G. Paramesvaran Pillai and Mr. P. K. Mathew yesterday cover most of the ground you have traversed. As I have told them, it is not the intention of the Government to invade private rights, and wherever long and *bona fide* occupations like private *kavus* and private *kshetrams* are

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly